To achieve Operational efficiency, a programme for new mail paradigm has also been initiated to optimize mail office network, improve quality, enhance efficiency of network and reduce overhead costs. It provides for better collection system and better organized bulk delivery. Mail Business Centres have been equipped with IT solutions and necessary operational equipments.

Other measures taken by Department of Post to improve operational efficiency and modernize operations are:—

1. A freighter aircraft has been introduced to serve the North East Sector which has brought about greater reliability in mail transmission and improved the services.

2. Regular monitoring of mail routing and delivery is undertaken by posting Test Letter and Trial Cards.

3. Surprise check on delivery of mails by the supervisory staff and officers.

4. Live mail survey at regular intervals both in rural and urban areas to identify weak links and streamline the mail transmission and delivery system.

5. Encouraging pre-sorting of mails by the bulk mailers by providing discount in postage as an incentive and new pricing policies to attract more customers. This also minimizes sorting time.

6. To cope up with the seasonal mails, separate centers with adequate manpower are opened to give expeditious handling to such mail.

7. Enhanced use of Pin Code and its popularization.

8. Installation of Automatic Mail Processing Centre at Mumbai and Chennai where accurate sorting is being done for 200 destinations at a time with a speed of 30,000 articles per hour.

9. Establishment of 110 Computerized Registration Sorting Centers in major Mail Offices to speed up processing of registered articles thereby expediting their delivery.

TRAI directive to mobile companies

1020. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recently directed the mobile telephone operators to prevent network congestion and ensure that calls by subscribers do not get disconnected abruptly;

(b) if so, whether the services provided by several mobile operators are not satisfactory to subscribers;

(c) if so, the details of complaints/suggestions received by Government in this regard; and

(d) the further steps contemplated by Government to ensure quality of services by operators and the action taken on complaints/suggestions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has laid down the benchmarks for Cellular Mobile Telephone Services through a Regulation on Quality of Service for Basic and Cellular Mobile Telephone Services, 2005 dated 1.7.2005. TRAI monitors the performance of the service providers through the quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMRs) and monthly congestion reports submitted by the service providers. TRAI also undertakes assessment of Quality of Service through audit and customer perception of service through survey by independent agencies. The reports by the independent agencies appointed by TRAI for assessing Quality of Service (QoS) of Cellular Mobile Service Providers, including call drops, through audit in some of the service areas revealed call drops in excess of the benchmark in some of the pockets/areas.

(c) Complaints have been received in respect of call drop, consgestion billing etc.

(d) Based on the complaints/suggestions received, TRAI has been taking various steps to ensure quality of service by basic service and cellular mobile service providers. These steps are as follows:-

1. TRAI has been closely monitoring the performance of Basic and Cellular Mobile Service against the benchmarks specified for various parameters.

2. To further upgrade the quality of service. TRAI has written to Chief Executive Officers of all the cellular mobile service providers to address call drop and to take necessary steps to further reduce the incidences of call drop in the network.

3. TRAI has been taking up with the service providers, wherever deficiencies noticed in achieving the benchmarks.

4. Earlier TRAI has issued a direction on 29th November, 2005 to all Cellular Mobile Service Providers to ensure, by 31st December 2005, that the quality of service parameters, including the level of Point of Interconnection (POIs) congestion, in its network should be strictly within the benchmark laid down by the TRAI. On analyzing the Performance Monitoring Report of the cellular mobile operators for the quarter ending December, 2005, it was revealed that while there has been some improvement in meeting the QoS benchmarks there has been increase in congestion at the POIs. TRAI, therefore, decided to issue show cause notices to those operators in whose network the number of POI having congestion above the benchmark has increased and accordingly issued

show cause notices to six mobile operators on 06.03.2006. These operators have since moved Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) against the show cause notices and the matter is subjudice since March, 2006.

5. TRAI also undertakes assessment of the Quality Service of Basic and Cellular Mobile Services through independent agency. The results of this audit/survey are widely published for public/Stakeholers information.

6. TRAI has taken the following steps to ensure quality of service of cellular operators:—

(i) TRAI has taken several steps to address interconnection issues which are directly related to congestion at the POIs due to which the inter-network communication is affected. These steps are given below:

a. TRAI issued the Interconnection (Reference Interconnection Offer) Regulation, 2002 which specified well defined terms for interconnection to be offered by service providers with significant market power to other operators;

b. TRAI *vide* its Direction dated 22.7.2003 directed to all service providers that direct connectivity should be made between all service providers within 3 months.

c. TRAI has also issued a directive dated 31.12.2003 on non disconnection of POIs without informing the interconnecting party and TRAI.

All these Regulation/Directions have been challenged in TDSAT and the court has set aside these regulation/direction. The Court has also ruled that the power of TRAI to fix the terms and conditions of interconnection are subject to the license conditions and the existing interconnection agreements between the operators. TRAI has appealed in Supreme Court of India against the decision of TDSAT in these cases. All these cases are subjudice.

(ii) TRAI *vide* direction date 7th June, 2005 had directed all the service providers to provide interconnection within 90 days of payment made by the interconnection seeker.

(iii) TRAI *vide* its letter dated 13th January, 2006 had pointed out to Department of Telecommunications (DoT) that due to anomalies and inconsistencies in the terms and conditions of the license agreements it has become difficult to ensure effective interconnection between the service providers. Therefore, the authority had requested DoT to suitably amend a few clauses of the CMTS and Unified Access License Agreements making it clear that Interconnection with other service providers shall be as per Orders/Regulations/Directives issued by the TRAI from time to time. TRAI had also suggested that para (ii) of Section 11(1)(b) of TRAI Act

may be amended so that there remains no ambiguity in the interpretation of this section relating to powers of TRAI for fixing the terms and conditions of interconnectivity between the service providers.

(iv) TRAI has also proposed an amendment in TRAI Act so that TRAI may directly impose penalty on the operators not meeting the QoS parameters.

Regarding action on complainants/suggestions, the individual consumer complaints received in TRAI are forwarded to service providers for redressal. The Telecom Consumers Protection Redressal of Grievances Regulations, 2007 also provide a framework for dealing with complaints alleging violation of the TRAI Act or regulations made thereunder or directions issued or orders made under the TRAI Act, and for dealing with complaints which are of a generic nature or complaints alleging the practices adopted by the service providers adversely affective the interest of the consumers. Such complaints are referred to service providers for investigation and for finding out root cause of such complaints and the service providers have to redress such complaints within one month and to take remedial measures for addressing systemic deficiency, if any within two months. TRAI takes into account, the various suggestions received by it while finalizing its recommendations, regulations, orders, directions, etc.

Quality of service by telecom service providers

1021. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the telecom service providers have failed to provide uninterrupted and trouble free services to its subscribers;

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether Government owned BSNL/MTNL are also not providing services to mobile subscribers as per their satisfaction norms;

(d) if so, the corrective steps Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has laid down the benchmarks for Cellular Mobile Telephone Services through a Regulation on Quality of Service for Basic and Cellular Mobile Telephone Services, 2005 dated 1.7.2005. TRAI monitors the performance of the service providers through the quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMRs) and monthly congestion reports submitted by the